

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, KS, KN, US

SUBJECT:PRESS BRIEFING: DMZ INCIDENT

1. FOLLOWING IS STATEMENT AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
PREPARED FOR NOON BRIEFING TODAY.

QUOTE:
ON THE MORNING OF AUGUST 18, KOREAN TIME, NORTH KOREAN
MILITARY PERSONNEL MADE AN UNPROVOKED ATTACK ON THE UNITED
NATIONS COMMAND PERSONNEL IN THE JOINT SECURITY AREA IN THE
DEMILITARIZED ZONE, BRUTALLY MURDERING TWO AMERICAN OF-
FICERS AND INJURING FOUR AMERICANS AND FIVE REPUBLIC OF
KOREA MILITARY PERSONNEL.

THE DETAILS REGARDING THIS ACT OF AGGRESSION ARE CONTAINED
IN A STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND, WHICH
I WILL NOW READ TO YOU.

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"TWO UNITED NATIONS COMMAND OFFICERS WERE MURDERED IN AN

UNPROVOKED ASSAULT BY NK GUARDS THIS MORNING AT THE JOINT SECURITY AREA, PANMUNJOM.

THE TWO ARMY OFFICERS, BOTH AMERICANS, DIED FROM MASSIVE

HEAD INJURIES AND STAB WOUNDS INFLICTED BY AN ESTIMATED 30 NK GUARDS WHO ATTACKED A SMALL UNC WORK PARTY WITH AXES, METAL PIKES AND AXE HANDLES ABOUT 10:45 A.M.

A ROK ARMY ENLISTED MAN, A SECURITY GUARD ASSIGNED TO THE U.S. ARMY SUPPORT GROUP, JSA, SUSTAINED STAB WOUNDS AND IS IN THE 121ST EVACUATION HOSPITAL IN SEOUL.

A ROKA OFFICER, FOUR OTHER U.S. SOLDIERS AND THREE ADDITIONAL ROKA SOLDIERS WERE TREATED FOR MINOR CUTS AND BRUISES.

THE UNC HAS CALLED FOR THE 379TH MILITARY ARMISTICE COMMAND MEETING TO CONVENE AT 11:00 A.M., THURSDAY, AUGUST 19. NK HAS NOT YET REPLIED.

THE THREE UNC OFFICERS AND THE ENLISTED GUARDS WERE ESCORTING FIVE KOREAN SERVICE CORPS WORKERS WHO WERE ROUTINELY TRIMMING BRANCHES FROM A TREE SOME 35 TO 40 YARDS FROM UNC CHECKPOINT NUMBER THREE AT THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE BRIDGE OF NO RETURN.

TWO NK OFFICERS AND SEVERAL GUARDS CAME TO THE AREA OF THE WORK. AFTER SOME DISCUSSION DURING WHICH A NK OFFICER EXPRESSED NO OBJECTION TO THE TREE TRIMMING, THE NK'S SUDDENLY DEMANDED THAT THE KSC'S STOP WORK.

SHORTLY AFTERWARDS A NK VEHICLE BROUGHT ADDITIONAL GUARDS AND THE NK OFFICER WAS HEARD TO TELL THEM QUOTE TO KILL END QUOTE THE UNC PERSONNEL AND THE FIGHT ENSUED WITH MANY OF THE NKS JOINING IN.

THESE MURDERS WERE THE FIRST DEATHS EVER IN THE JOINT SECURITY AREA, SITE OF THE JOINT ARMISTICE COMMAND MEETINGS. IT IS A NEUTRAL AREA WITHIN THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHERE FREE ACCESS AND MOVEMENT ARE GUARANTEED BY THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT. THE NKS ALSO DAMAGED THREE UNC VEHICLES DURING THE MELEE.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE CASUALTIES IS PENDING NOTIFICATION OF THE NEXT OF KIN. UNC CONTINUES TO INVESTIGATE THE INCIDENT."

THE NORTH KOREANS HAVE FALSELY CHARGED THAT THE PERSONNEL OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND FIRST ASSAULTED NORTH KOREAN GUARDS. THIS IS A LIE AND A FLAGRANT ATTEMPT TO DECEIVE. WE FIND IT SIGNIFICANT THAT THE NORTH KOREAN

ACCOUNT DOES NOT CLAIM THAT ANY NORTH KOREANS WERE WOUNDED OR THAT REINFORCEMENTS FROM THE UN COMMAND SIDE WERE SENT INTO THE JOINT SECURITY AREA.

THIS BRUTAL BEHAVIOR BY THE NORTH KOREAN REGIME TELLS US SOMETHING OF ITS TRUE NATURE, AND DEMONSTRATES THE HOLLOWNESS OF NORTH KOREA'S ALLEGED DESIRE FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE DIFFERENCES THAT EXIST BETWEEN IT AND SOUTH KOREA.

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THESE COWARDLY ACTS OF MURDER A SERIOUS VIOLATION OF THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT. THE NORTH KOREANS HAVE COMMITTED VIOLENT ACTS IN THE JOINT SECURITY AREA BEFORE BUT THESE MURDERS ARE THE FIRST SUCH DEATHS THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN THAT AREA SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT TWENTY-THREE YEARS AGO.

THE UNITED STATES VIEWS THIS BRUTAL AND UNPROVOKED ASSAULT WITH GRAVITY AND CONCERN AND WARNS THE NORTH KOREANS THAT SUCH VIOLENT AND BELLIGERENT ACTIONS CANNOT BE TOLERATED. NORTH KOREA MUST BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL THE CONSEQUENCES OF ITS BRUTAL ACTION.
UNQUOTE.

2. QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS THE NORTH KOREAN MOTIVE IN THE ATTACK?

ANSWER: IT IS DIFFICULT TO SPECULATE ON NORTH KOREAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MOTIVES. NEVERTHELESS IT IS POSSIBLE THAT PYONGYANG WAS INTERESTED IN RAISING TENSION AT THE DMZ AT THE TIME OF THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE NOW GOING ON IN SRI LANKA, AND TO COINCIDE WITH ITS SUBMISSION OF A RESOLUTION AT THE UNGA ACCUSING US AND ROK OF BELLIGERENT ACTIVITIES. IN THIS CONTEXT, PYONGYANG MIGHT SEE ANY SIGN OF TENSION AS PROVING ITS CLAIM THAT THERE IS A DANGER OF WAR ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA.

QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH YOU JUST MENTIONED IN YOUR STATEMENT?

ANSWER: I WOULD RATHER NOT GO INTO THAT AT THIS TIME.

QUESTION: WHEN WAS THE LAST SERIOUS INCIDENT IN THE JSA?

ANSWER: THE LAST SERIOUS INCIDENT OCCURRED JUNE 30, 1975 WHEN A US ARMY MAJOR WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED IN AN ATTACK BY NORTH KOREAN NEWSMEN WHILE A MILITARY ARMISTICE

COMMISSION MEETING WAS IN PROGRESS AT PANMUNJOM. THE MAJOR'S INJURIES REQUIRED EMERGENCY SURGERY AND SUBSEQUENT EVACUATION TO THE US.

QUESTION: WHAT HAVE THE NORTH KOREANS SAID ABOUT THE INCIDENT?

ANSWER: THEY HAVE CLAIMED THAT THE UNC PROVOKED THE INCIDENT AND THEY WERE ACTING IN SELF-DEFENSE. AS I SAID IN MY STATEMENT, THIS IS AN ABSOLUTE LIE.

QUESTION: HOW MANY AMERICANS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN DMZ INCIDENTS?

ANSWER: AS I NOTED BEFORE, THE DEATHS IN THIS INCIDENT ARE THE FIRST TO HAVE OCCURRED IN THE JSA. SINCE THE ARMISTICE IN 1953, 47 AMERICANS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN KOREA AND MANY MORE WOUNDED. MORE THAN 1000 KOREANS HAVE BEEN KILLED.

QUESTION: WERE THERE ANY NORTH KOREAN CASUALTIES?
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ANSWER: WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY NOR HAVE THEY CLAIMED ANY.

QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR THE JSA?

ANSWER: IN GENERAL, UNC PERSONNEL ARE INSTRUCTED TO EXERCISE GREAT DISCRETION AND ATTEMPT TO AVOID INCIDENTS.

QUESTION: WERE THE TWO GROUPS ARMED AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT?

ANSWER: BOTH NORTH KOREANS AND UNC GUARDS IN THE JOINT SECURITY AREA GENERALLY CARRY SIDE ARMS. I WILL HAVE TO TAKE THE QUESTION WITH REGARD TO THIS PARTICULAR INCIDENT.

3. NUMBER OF OTHER QUESTIONS WERE ASKED. TRANSCRIPT

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